

APPENDIX 6 EFFECTIVE ORAL ASSESSMENT

Birth to Age 3 - Referral to Dentist

Referral of a child in this age group to the dentist may be appropriate. If oral problems are apparent, referral should follow.

Many dentists prefer to examine the child (and counsel the parents) by one year of age (ideally at about 9 months of age). This early dental visit enables the dentist and parents to discuss ways to nurture excellent oral health before any serious problems have had an opportunity to develop.

Early referral is indicated when:

- dietary fluoride supplements are necessary
- oral hygiene appears inadequate
- dietary practices are abnormal (Baby Bottle Tooth Decay potential)
- eruption of teeth are abnormal (delayed or crowded)
- dental disease is present

Age 3 and Above (refer all children for dental care)

Key questions for the parent of the infant or young child prior to oral assessment.

1. Does the child consume water with adequate levels of fluoride for prevention (birth to age 16). This is the most important question in relation to the prevention of future dental disease. If the child resides in a home with rural well water or in a community that fails to add fluoride to its water, then a referral to the dentist is necessary for a water analysis. A daily fluoride supplement may be needed to ensure adequate prevention of dental caries. A Wisconsin Community Fluoridation Census will aid in determining the fluoridation status of community water systems.
2. Has child been to the dentist?
3. Does the parent brush or assist in brushing the child's teeth?
4. Does the child sleep with the bottle or carry the bottle during the day?
5. Does the child have any dental problems, concerns or complaints?
6. Have any brothers or sisters had dental problems?

Wisconsin Community Fluoridation census is available from:

Bureau of Public Health
Attn: Oral Health Consultant
1414 E. Washington Avenue
Madison, WI 53703-3044

Oral Assessment Instruction Detail is available from:

Bureau of Health Care Financing
Attn: HealthCheck Coordinator
Post Office Box 309
Madison, WI 53701